What Is Claimed Is:

1. A virtual world comprising:

a virtual environment;

5 a plurality of virtual elements within said

virtual environment, each of said virtual elements

being capable of interacting with other of said virtual

elements within the virtual environment; and

user controls for enabling a user to interact with

10 at least one of said virtual elements within said

virtual environment;

wherein at least one of said virtual elements

comprises a virtual character comprising a behavior

state, an emotion state and a learning state, and

15 wherein said behavior state, said emotion state and

said learning state are capable of changing in response

to (i) interaction with other virtual elements within

the virtual environment, and/or (ii) commands from said

user input controls; and

20 wherein said virtual environment is configured so

that additional virtual elements can be introduced into

said virtual environment.

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2. A virtual character for disposition within a virtual environment, said virtual character comprising a behavior state, an emotion state and a learning state, and wherein said behavior state, said emotion state and said learning state are capable of changing in response to (i) interaction with other virtual elements within the virtual environment, and/or (ii) commands from outside said virtual environment.

3. A virtual character according to claim 2 wherein said virtual character further comprises a sensory capability for sensing other virtual elements within said virtual environment.

4. A virtual character according to claim 3 wherein said sensory capability is configured to sense the presence of other virtual elements within said virtual environment.

5. A virtual character according to claim 3 wherein said sensory capability is configured to sense

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the motion of other virtual elements within said virtual environment.

6. A virtual character according to claim 4 wherein said sensory capability is configured to sense a characteristic of other virtual elements within said virtual environment.

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